

verticillate, the upper in pairs or alternate, blades of the larger ones often 10 cm. long, petiole often villous at the junction with the blade, blade more or less puberulent beneath, or glabrous, glaucous on lower surface, usually repand; inflorescences one in the axil of each leaf; ripe capsules 20–30 mm. long; seeds, exclusive of wing, 5–6.5 mm. broad.—Pennsylvania to western Florida, Missouri, Arkansas and Oklahoma. It has been found in all parts of Tennessee. The following is a representative, but not a complete list of stations. Woods, rocky ridge, Cades Cove, June 15, 1928, *Anderson & Jennison*; White Cliff Springs, Monroe County, June 29, 1890, *Scribner*; along Clinch River between Tate and Tazewell, May 12, 1929, *Hesler & Jennison*; Knoxville, *Scribner*, no. 7345; ledges, Lookout Mountain, Chattanooga, May 22, 1911, *Churchill*; sandy woods along creek, Daysville, *Jennison, Hesler & Anderson*, no. 1408; Cowan, July 14, 1867, *Gattinger*; Kingston Springs, *Svenson*, no. 280; Haywood County, June 6, 1893, *Bain*.

DIOSCOREA VILLOSA L. Sp. Pl. ii. 1033 (1753). *D. paniculata* Michx. Fl. Bor.-Am. ii. 239 (1803). Rootstock little branched (Bartlett); stem twining; none of the leaves verticillate, blades rarely more than 8 cm. long, densely pubescent on lower surface, petiole glabrous; inflorescence a small panicle or raceme, one in the axil of each leaf; ripe capsule 15–20 mm. long; seeds, exclusive of wing, 3–4.5 (usually 4) mm. broad.—Connecticut to New Jersey, west to Minnesota and Oklahoma.

Var. *glabrifolia* (Bartlett) Stone, Pl. So. N. J. 358 (1912) (*D. paniculata*, var. *glabrifolia* Bartlett, l. c. 15 (1910)), has glabrous leaves, otherwise as in the species. One specimen from Haywood County, Tennessee, *Bain*, no. 321, is cited by Bartlett. This specimen has no capsules or lower leaves by which it can be positively identified. It bears the same data as a specimen of *D. quaternata* from the same region, and the same number as one of *D. quaternata* collected the year before. It is probable that this is a fragmentary duplicate of one of these specimens, and that *D. villosa* has not been collected in Tennessee.

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SOME INADEQUATELY CHARACTERIZED SPECIES OF GEORGE VASEY

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In 1907, the late Theodor Holm clearly described a new grass as *Glyceria paupercula* Holm in Fedde, Repert. iii. 337 (1907), stating, correctly, that "It is a member of the section *Atropis* Rupr." A definite type was cited and afterward an exquisite heliotype plate

of it with the diagnostic details was published: Geol. Surv. Can. Pl. x. Everything essential to ideal diagnosis and publication of a new species was there, except the actual date of issue of the plate, a matter beyond the control of its author.¹ Consequently, viewing *Glyceria* § *Atropis* as constituting a genus, *Puccinellia*, we transferred Holm's species to it, making the combination *Puccinellia paupercula* (Holm) Fernald & Weatherby, RHODORA, xviii. 18 (1916). Typical *P. paupercula* is essentially eastern, but a larger and wide-spread variety, var. *alaskana* (Scribn. & Merr.) Fern. & Weath., l. c., based on *P. alaskana* Scribn. & Merr. Contr. U. S. Nat. Herb. xiii. 78 (1910), abounds on Vancouver Island.

It now seems that in 1888 George Vasey got hold of something of the sort. In a running account of a number of new grasses he wrote² without any paragraphing of the separate entities, without any differentiation of them as new, and for the most part without any statement of really diagnostic characters, a rambling summary of them, thus:

A considerable number of other new or interesting forms have been received . . . and I wish here briefly to give a short account of them. Mr. J. Macoun botanized in Vancouver Island the past season . . . he sends the following: *Deyeuxia Vancouverensis*, a small species, 10 or 12 inches high, with spicate panicle 1½ to 2 inches long, approaching *D. strigosa*, Kth.; . . . *Deschampsia caespitosa*, variety *maritima*, 6 to 8 inches high, growing on the seashore; . . . *Glyceria pumila*, about 4 inches high, panicle small, mostly of three to five approximate sessile spikelets with a lower branch ½ to 1 inch long; *Bromus Macounii*, closely resembling *B. erectus*, Huds., but with a smaller, purplish panicle.

Mr. G. C. Nealley . . . has discovered several new species, among which are *Triodia Nealleyi*, of similar aspect to *T. avenacea*, and another *Triodia* of which, unfortunately, too little for full characterization was collected and which may be called *T. repens*; . . . *Sporobolus Nealleyi*, a dwarf, erect species, with small, open panicle; etc., etc.

Naturally, such names are published *as names* but they are not accompanied by any characters which are *specifically* diagnostic; at best the brief and inconsequential phrases accompanying them merely describe habit and not the details of glumes, lemma, palea, ligule or other parts which Dr. Vasey knew to be fundamental in separating species of grasses. It is most likely that he was merely publishing what nowadays would be called a preliminary announcement, intending later to give proper diagnoses; as some of his other

¹ For data regarding this series of plates see RHODORA, xxx. 151 (1928).

² Bull. Torr. Bot. Cl. xv. 48, 49 (1888).

work shows he regularly prepared diagnoses in his more serious papers. Such entities as Vasey had, if they can be found, for he cited no actual types or specimens, may be identifiable; but it seems to us a very doubtful and needlessly disturbing policy to take up their names to displace those of species which had been carefully characterized and accurately illustrated. Nevertheless, we now have an effort made to displace the beautifully definite *Puccinellia paupercula* by the woefully indefinite *P. pumila* (Vasey) Hitchc. Am. Journ. Bot. xxi. 129 (1934). Vasey's original description of the habit, "about 4 inches high, panicle small," etc. has already been fully quoted. There are many species which may be "about 4 inches high" and with "panicle small." Vasey gave not a single word about the size of the anther and the grain nor the characters of glume, lemma and palea, all of which are highly important in *Puccinellia*. Furthermore, he did not even give a clue and presumably did not know that it was a *Puccinellia*; to him it was simply another *Glyceria*. Taxonomy has reached a low ebb when such inadequately defined names can be taken up to displace those which had perfect definition. Quite aside from the unimportant question of the authorship of *Puccinellia paupercula*, we feel that the important cause of sound and convincing nomenclature would be seriously set back by accepting such names of Vasey (and others) as those above noted. At best they are *nomina subnuda*.

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